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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ABUJA 001891

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: ECOWAS SUMMIT ON COTE D'IVOIRE AND OTHER REGIONAL
CRISES

REF: STATE 180464

Classified By: Ambassador John Campbell for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d).

11. (C) Summary. The ECOWAS Heads of State and Government met in Abuja for an Extraordinary Summit on September 30 to discuss the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. Liberia was a late addition to the agenda. The leaders created a list of recommendations, which they have not made public, which will be forwarded to the African Union for consideration on 6 October. The Summit called for Liberia elections to be held as scheduled on October 11. President Obasanjo was appointed as mediator for the conflict between The Gambia and Senegal. Text of the final communique follows. End Summary.

12. (U) ECOWAS convened a Summit of Heads of State and Government in Abuja on 30 September to discuss the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. The situations in Liberia, Senegal/Gambia, and Guinea Bissau were raised under Any Other Business. Of the 15 ECOWAS member states, 9 Heads of State were present (listed in the communique text below), and only Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde were not represented at all. Nigeria's President Obasanjo attended in his role as Chair of the African Union, and Nigeria's Foreign Minister led Nigeria's delegation. Post was represented on the margins of the Summit by PolMilOff, who was the only foreign diplomat present.

13. (C) Several UN representatives present expressed disappointment over the lack of progress made at the Summit, not that their hopes were especially high going into the meetings. The list of recommendations referenced in Paragraph 9 of the communique has not been made public, but Chambas says it includes a plan to retain President Gbagbo as President of Cote d'Ivoire until elections are held, but to replace the Prime Minister on the expiration of his term. This surprised the new French liaison officer to ECOWAS, Colonel Jose Fernandes, who said that as of September 29th, all of the options being discussed at ECOWAS involved retaining both the President and the PM. Fernandes was distressed that the choice to remove only the PM was "undemocratic" as the PM is more representative of the people than the President. Gbagbo did not attend the Summit, despite Chambas' confidence that he would, but was represented by Economic and Social Council President Fologo. The Ivorian delegation did make a point of distributing an address delivered by Gbagbo on 27 September in which Gbagbo declared Mbeki's mediation a success and blamed all of Cote d'Ivoire's problems on the rebels. The Ivorian delegation remained at ECOWAS until the communique was issued to ensure that the language did not vary from what was agreed to in the meeting.

14. (C) On Liberia, ECOWAS included language in the communique calling for elections to be held on October 11. NTGL Chairman Bryant did not attend the Summit despite the fact that he was in Abuja on the evening of 29 September. On October 3, Chambas told the Ambassador that he and CPA Mediator Abubakar held talks over the weekend with the plaintiffs in the Liberian Supreme Court decision in a failed attempt to persuade them to end their legal challenges to the election for the good of Liberia. Chambas characterized the plaintiff's positions as "petty" and inflexible.

15. (C) On the Gambia/Senegal dispute, little progress was possible because the President of The Gambia did not travel to Abuja. UN representatives from Dakar said Jammeh did not attend the Summit because Senegal's Wade had said he was not going to attend, only to change his mind at the last minute. The UN reps described this as typical of the relationship between the two leaders. The UN representatives also expressed disappointment that while the invitation letter they received from ECOWAS gave the impression that the Gambia/Senegal dispute would receive equal billing with Cote d'Ivoire at the Summit, the meeting was overwhelmingly focused on Cote d'Ivoire.

16. (U) Begin Text of Communique:

11. Following the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire held in New York on 14th September 2005 and at the initiative of His Excellency, Mamadou Tandja, President of the Republic of Niger, current Chairman of ECOWAS, an Extraordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was held on 30th September 2005 at the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

12. The Summit assessed the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, characterised by the deadlock in the implementation of the different agreements and the impossibility of holding the presidential elections.

13. The following Heads of State and Government or their duly accredited representatives attended the session:

His Excellency Mr. Mathieu Kerekou
President of the Republic of Benin

His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaore
President of Burkina Faso
Chairman of the Council of Ministers

His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor
President of the Republic of Ghana
His Excellency Mr. Amadou Toumani Toure
President of the Republic of Mali

His Excellency Mr. Mamadou Tandja
President of the Republic of Niger
Current Chairman of ECOWAS

His Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo
President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the
Federal Republic of Nigeria, Current Chairman of the African
Union

His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Wade
President of the Republic of Senegal

His Excellency Alhaji (Dr) Ahmad Tejan Kabbah
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

His Excellency Mr. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe
President of the Togolese Republic

Her Excellency Mrs. Fatoumata Sidibe Kaba
Minister of Foreign Affairs, representing His Excellency, Mr.
Lansana Conte, President of the Republic of Guinea

Honourable Bala Musa Gaye
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, representing His

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Excellency Alhaji Yahya AJJ Jammeh, President of the Republic
of The Gambia

His Excellency Mr. Laurent Dona Fologo
President of the Economic and Social Council, representing
His Excellency Laurent Gbagbo, President of the Republic of
Cote d'Ivoire

Mr. Roland N. Bedell
Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of Liberia in Nigeria,
representing His Excellency Gyude Bryant, Chairman of the
National Transitional Government of Liberia

14. The following high-ranking personalities from the
International Community also attended the Extraordinary
Session.

Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas
ECOWAS Executive Secretary

His Excellency Ambassador Said Djinnit
Commissioner, representing His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar
Konare, Chairman of the African Union Commission

His Excellency Mr. Pierre Schori
Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United
Nations in Cote d'Ivoire

His Excellency Antonio Monteiro
High Representative of the United Nations for Elections in
Cote d'Ivoire

His Excellency Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah
United Nations' Secretary General's Special Representative
for West Africa

His Excellency Ambassador Ralph Uwechue
Special Representative of the ECOWAS Executive Secretary in
Cote d'Ivoire

The Situation in Cote d'Ivoire

15. After an in-depth consideration of the latest
developments in Cote d'Ivoire, the Heads of State and
Government expressed deep concern about the persistence and
deterioration of the situation in the country, a situation

with the potential to destabilise the entire West African sub-region.

16. They also expressed deep concern about the many obstacles hindering the process in the resolution of the Ivorian crisis which led to the situation where all the parties recognised the impossibility of holding presidential elections at the scheduled date.

17. The Heads of State took note of the report of the African Union Mediator and expressed their gratitude to President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa for his untiring efforts, which made it possible to achieve significant progress in the implementation of the provisions of the Linas Marcoussis and Accra III agreements.

18. The reiterated that the Linas Marcoussis, the Accra and Pretoria Agreements constituted the preferred framework for the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire.

19. The Heads of State and Government decided to make recommendations to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union scheduled to meet in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 6th October 2005.

10. The Heads of State and Government solemnly appealed to all Ivorians parties and to the people to work towards maintenance of peace, stability, and harmony in Cote d'Ivoire. They further assured them of their support and unflinching solidarity of the leaders and the people of the sub-region and their commitment to support the peace process and reconciliation.

The Situation in Liberia

11. The Heads of State took note of the forthcoming presidential elections in Liberia on 11 October 2005. They called upon the Liberian state institutions, all political actors, and the civil society to respect the letter and spirit of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement to ensure the conduct of credible elections.

Relations Between The Gambia and Senegal

12. The Heads of State expressed concern about the tension in the relations between The Gambia and Senegal. They mandated President Obasanjo of Nigeria to use his good offices to work for the normalization of the relations between the two sisterly countries.

The Situation in Guinea Bissau

13. The Heads of State and Government expressed appreciation for the progress made by the political class in Guinea Bissau towards reconciliation and consensual inauguration of the President elect on 1st October 2005.

14. They urged the International Community to fulfill their commitment to extend financial, technical, and material assistance to Guinea Bissau.

15. The Heads of State and Government expressed their gratitude to President Obasanjo for the excellent facilities made available to ensure the success of the Summit.

Done in Abuja, this day 30th September 2005.

End text.

CAMPBELL